

Remarks

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the Office Action of November 6, 2007.

1. Claim Amendments

Claim 2 has been amended to capture embodiments in which the silicone compound is a hydrophilic polyorganosiloxane.

Claim 8 has not been amended.

New Claim 9 has been added to capture embodiments of the epoxy resin composition “consisting essentially of” the elements recited and excludes “hydrophobic silicone compounds”. The surface area of the silica has been redefined. Support for this claim can be found in Examples 2, 3 and 5.

No new matter has been added.

2. Claims 2 and 8 Are Not Obvious Over US Patent Nos. 6,506,822, 6,310,120 and 5,362,775.

Claims 2 and 8 have been rejected over the combination of US Patent No. 6,506,822 to Ichiroku (Ichiroku), US patent no. 6,310,120 to Shibara et al. (Shibara), and US Patent No. 5,362,775 to Shintai (Shintai). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The examiner has not shown that this combination of references teaches an epoxy resin composition comprising, *inter alia*, a polyorganosiloxane, an ultrafine silica having a specific surface area of 120-240 m²/g in an amount of 0.2-0.8% by weight based on the total weight of the resin composition, and an phenolic curing agent. While the cited art may have elements of Applicant’s invention as claimed in Claims 2 and 8, the examiner has not shown that one of ordinary skill in the art would combine these elements, particularly in an unpredictable art.

While the examiner has taken position that Ichiroku teaches an epoxy resin having a silica with a surface area in the range overlapping the surface area claimed in Claim 2 (and Claim 8), the examiner has not shown that the combination Shibara and Shintai teaches an epoxy resin composition with the ultrafine silica in amount of 0.2-0.8% or having a phenolic curing agent. Specifically, Shintai’s addition to the art is the use of a separated organophosphorus curing accelerator with a phenolic curing agent (col 4, lines 1-3) and

Shiobara's addition to the art is the use of non-transmissive spherical inorganic filler (Col 4, lines 4-26).

Further, Claim 2 (as amended) is not taught by the combination of references because Ichiroku teaches away from Applicant's invention as claimed in Claim 2. Specifically, as Ichiroku teaches the use of oil emulsification and teaches the use of hydrophobic organopolysiloxanes, the use of hydrophilic polyorganosiloxane is counter-intuitive from Ichiroku. As such and without more, this combination of reference cannot teach Applicant's invention as claimed in Claim 2.

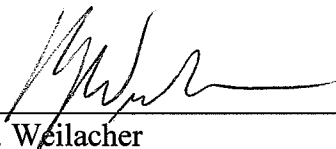
Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 2 and 8 are not obvious over the prior art and respectfully requests that the examiner withdraw the rejections to Claims 2 and 8.

Claim 9 is drawn to a further embodiment of the present invention and is patentable for the reasons explained above.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request such action. If the examiner has any questions that can be answered by telephone, please contact the patent attorney of record at the address and telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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